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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 000479

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR IO, NEA AND PRM

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TAGS: [PREL](#), [EAID](#), [ASEC](#), [IZ](#), [JO](#), [UNSC](#)

SUBJECT: UNAMI OFFICIALS HINT DEPUTY SRSG FOR IRAQ WILL BE BASED IN AMMAN; UPDATE UN SECURITY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES

Classified By: DCM David Hale, per 1.5 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Although the UN has not yet decided where to base Deputy Special Representative for Iraq Ross Mountain, UNAMI staff have been instructed to establish a 17-person "coordination cell" to support his activities in Amman. Mountain will oversee UN operational and program issues in Iraq and will begin a visit to Amman on January 28. UNAMI expects Mountain will push for an "early" trip to Iraq. UNAMI reported that the UN interagency security mission to Iraq will focus on bringing one installation -- likely the Canal Hotel -- up to UN security standards to facilitate the reentry of international staff to Iraq, but UNHCR reported that UNSECOORD will focus on reentry to Basra. UNAMI expects UNHAS to resume flights to Iraq at the end of January. UNAMI's nearly complete strategic plan for Iraq awaits political guidance from UN NY, while program-focused UN agencies are turning to international NGOs and private contractors to deliver services in Iraq. End summary.

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SRSG Brahimi and Deputy SRSG Mountain:  
Cyprus/Amman Split and a Possible Trip to Iraq?  
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12. (C) UNAMI Humanitarian Officers Maggs Mac Guinness and Maura Lynch (protect) reviewed still-evolving UNAMI operational plans with visiting PRM and CPA officers and regional refcoord on January 18. According to Mac Guinness, UN Special Representative for Iraq Lakhdar Brahimi will focus on the UN's broader political role and human rights issues and Deputy SRSG Ross Mountain will focus on operational and program issues. While SRSG Brahimi will be based in the UN protected zone in Cyprus, UNSYG Annan has not yet decided where Deputy SRSG Mountain will be based. UNAMI staff expect that Mountain will spend a great deal of time in Amman, as they have been instructed to set up a 17-person "coordination cell" in Amman to support the Deputy SRSG's activities. Mac Guinness said program-focused UN agencies had argued unsuccessfully that both Brahimi and Mountain should be based in Amman in order to maintain access to Iraq and the UN's humanitarian partners, access viewed by agencies as key to UN "credibility" in Iraq. UN agencies, according to Mac Guinness, were deeply disappointed by the SYG's decision to locate the SRSG in Cyprus.

13. (C) Until SRSG Brahimi is "fully up and running," Deputy SRSG Mountain is expected to spend most of his time in Cyprus. Mac Guinness said Mountain will arrive in Cyprus on January 24 but will make a short trip to Amman beginning on January 28. She was unsure where Mountain would be based in Amman, as none of the UN buildings in Amman meet Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS). Mac Guinness predicted that Mountain would also push UNSYG Annan to permit him to make an "early" trip to Baghdad.

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Security Mission to Iraq,  
Resumption of UNHAS Flights  
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14. (C) As reported in the press, a UN interagency security mission is expected to go to Iraq soon to conduct an assessment of UN installations' MOSS compliance. According to Mac Guinness, the four-person team will focus on bringing one Baghdad installation -- most likely the Canal Hotel -- up to MOSS compliance in order to serve as the focal point for the gradual re-entry of UN staff. The team will also look at UN installations in the north and south. (In a separate January 18 meeting, UNHCR/Iraq Chief of Mission Yacoub El Hillo reported that UNSECOORD also would lead an interagency security assessment to Basra, focused on bringing a facility near the port to MOSS compliance in order to serve as a base for UN staff.) Mac Guinness added that the UN had received funding from the European Union to complete security upgrades to UN installations in Iraq, while the UK's Department for International Development provided funding for staff security training.

15. (C) In a separate security development, Mac Guinness reported that the UN's C-130 (on loan from the Netherlands)

had been upgraded with further anti-missile capabilities and was due to resume Amman-Baghdad flights at the end of January. The UNHAS Beechcraft (currently being used to respond to the Bam earthquake) also is due to resume flights to northern Iraq at the end of January.

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Strategic Plan Needs Political Framework  
While UN Programs Continue with NGOs and Contractors  
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16. (C) Mac Guinness said that work on the programming aspects of the UN's strategic plan for Iraq was nearly complete but that decisions had not yet been made in NY regarding the UN's overall political role in Iraq. Without that overarching framework, she said, the UN's strategic plan was simply a list of activities. And even if the UN came to agreement on its role following UNSYG Annan's January 19 meeting with Ambassador Bremer and the Iraqi Governing Council, any planning documents would constitute at best a "rolling strategy." Who knows, Mac Guinness mused, what the UN's role in Iraq would be after June 30?

17. (C) In the meantime, UN agencies are finding new ways to deliver services in Iraq. In addition to using international NGOs as implementing partners, the UN also is hiring private contractors to deliver services. UNICEF, for example, has engaged 800 contractors to deliver assistance. Mac Guinness added that many ex-UNOCHI staff (let go after completion of the Oil-for-Food program) have started new private companies to fill the void left by UN agencies.

18. (U) CPA Baghdad minimize considered.  
GNEHM